

Executive Summary

Ethnographic Overview and Assessment
Booker T. Washington National Monument
by
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Overview

Central to understanding the history of [Booker T.] Washington and this place are issues that are complex, emotionally charged, and that many Americans have long avoided.

(Statement for Management: Booker T. Washington National Monument, 1996: 13)

The research summarized here was prompted by the continuing effort to interpret Booker T. Washington National Monument (BOWA) in light of its relationship to slavery, racism, and race relations in America. In 1997, concurrently with its General Management Plan process, the park commissioned Dr. Willie Baber, Professor of Anthropology at University of North Carolina at Greensboro, to undertake a study of past and present ethnographic and historical resources at BOWA. Dr. Baber has sought to answer questions about:

- the park's existing ethnographic resources
- how previous interpretations of the park have incorporated those resources
- gaps in information that may have an impact on interpretive strategies at the park
- the relationship between BOWA and groups traditionally associated with the park

This executive summary outlines Dr. Baber's findings and recommendations, as found in his "Ethnographic Overview and Assessment, Booker T. Washington National Monument, Final Report" submitted on September 15, 1998. His work addresses three areas affecting resource management and interpretive strategies at BOWA:

1) Findings on the Presentation of Slavery and Plantation Life

More work needs to be done to understand specific social conditions in the Hales Ford community before the Civil War, and the general characteristics of small plantations like the Burroughs farm. Lack of knowledge about these areas at BOWA has led to at least one apparent interpretive error at the park: the misidentification of what was probably a slave dwelling as the Burroughs "big house." Given the park's importance as a site where the history of slavery and race relations is presented to the public, it is important to represent these subjects as fully and accurately as possible.

2) Findings on the Relationship between BOWA's History and Interpretation

Changing race relations at the time of BOWA's founding, and ambiguity in Booker T. Washington's own approach to race relations, have played a part in the park's historical reluctance to confront the day-to-day realities of slavery too directly in its interpretive strategies. These aspects of the park's past, rather than being seen as obstacles, should be made a part of BOWA's interpretation. They offer opportunities for understanding some of the lasting effects of the experiences of slavery and racism in American society.

3) Links with Community Partners

Booker T. Washington and BOWA are a source of pride for many African-Americans in the area near the park. Other community groups, too, are eager to become more closely associated with BOWA.

General Findings

1) Findings on the Presentation of Slavery and Plantation Life

Site-specific historical evidence and an understanding of plantation systems suggests that the Burroughs family would likely have lived in a house both farther away from the slave quarters and larger than the "big house" site outlined with stones at BOWA today. Dr. Baber's research suggests that the Burroughs "big house" may in fact have stood on a 7-acre parcel of land north of the birthplace cabin. This 7-acre parcel was sold to Thomas Burroughs in 1847 and subsequently transferred to his brother James (owner of Booker T. Washington) and later, perhaps via an irregular or unrecorded transaction, to James's son-in-law. Dr. Baber suggests that this new site for the "big house" makes much more sense in light of what is known about social and spatial relationships among owners and slaves in regions like the Virginia Piedmont. The proposed change resolves several inconsistencies, and has important implications for the park's depiction of slavery (see "Implications of Findings," p. 5).

The location of the "big house" has probably been misinterpreted because of:

- lack of direct evidence (no archaeological or ethnographic evidence to verify the existence of a house in the area of the 1847 deed)
- misinterpretation or lack of awareness of indirect evidence (for example, an inventory of James Burroughs's possessions, the value of his property, and the size of his family)
- lack of understanding of slaveholding systems in areas like the Piedmont, where slaves and owners would have occupied dwellings that spatially reflected the social distance between classes
- misinterpretation or lack of awareness of transactions surrounding the 7-acre tract of land north of the Burroughs cemetery (researchers have assumed a clerical error, instead of searching for alternative explanations for the 1847 deed, and most NPS surveys have started from the assumption that the boundaries of the Burroughs property were known)

- misreading of Booker T. Washington's statements during his 1908 visit to his birthplace (Washington often spoke in parables rather than literally, but his words about his boyhood home during the 1908 visit have been interpreted in a literal sense)

2) Findings on the Relationship between BOWA's History and Interpretation

BOWA was established at a time of transition in American race relations. There is no direct evidence that racial antagonism affected the initial interpretation of the monument. However, the shifting social climate of the times was reflected in the establishment of the park, and the attendant ambivalence toward presenting the realities of the plantation system continues to have an impact on interpretive strategies today.

The initial authorization for the park contained two different interpretive directions:

- commemorating the birthplace of Booker T. Washington, with an emphasis on the birthplace cabin
- restoring the plantation setting, with an emphasis on the "living farm" concept

Neither directive focused on presenting the realities of slavery as Booker T. Washington would have experienced it. This has meant that BOWA has not fulfilled its potential as a site where visitors can fully consider race relations in the American past and present.

Interpretations of the park have tended to veer between the two original strategies. The tension between them has effectively overshadowed the importance of conducting fresh inquiries into historical records and material culture applicable to the interpretation of BOWA. A reconsideration of existing ethnographic resources follows in the section on "Primary Ethnographic Resources" (p. 6). Suggestions for future resources and research directions are contained in the concluding section of this summary, pp. 10-13.

Although there is no direct evidence of racial antagonism in the original interpretation of BOWA, it seems clear that neither the NPS nor Sidney J. Phillips, who initiated the monument, was willing to confront the issues of race, racism, and slavery inherent in interpreting the site. This reluctance was shared by scholars of the time, and led to the downplaying of the plantation aspect of the park, and a focus first on the birthplace cabin and then on the daily economy of the "living farm." Inconsistencies, like the existence of the 1847 deed, were overlooked or seen as unimportant because of this focus.

While there appears to have been no direct attempt to de-emphasize the everyday realities of slavery at BOWA, then, the circumstances of the park's founding, and subsequent negotiations around the two initial interpretive strategies, have had the effect of discouraging any ongoing investigation into the plantation system into which Booker T. Washington was born.

3) Links with Community Partners

Possible partners expressed considerable enthusiasm about working more closely with BOWA. The potential clearly exists for greater involvement of groups and individuals, particularly those whose purposes fit well with the park's (for example, museums, colleges, chambers of commerce). Several ideas for collaborative efforts emerged from the discussions with potential partners. These will be listed in the "Recommendations" section of this summary, pp. 12-16.

Implications of Findings for Interpretation of BOWA

Visitors to BOWA are presented with a picture of plantation life in which owners and slaves lived quite similar lives, occupying similar dwellings and working side by side on the farm. This picture of the Burroughses as poor "dirt farmers" and of their slaves as something close to members of the family has been based on:

- the supposition that the log buildings in the vicinity of Booker T. Washington's birth cabin were the only structures on the Burroughs property
- a literal reading of Washington's words on his 1908 visit, which seem to indicate that there was no great gap between the social statuses of owners and slaves
- a lack of knowledge of social relationships among slaves and slaveholders in the Piedmont region during the mid-19th century
- a historical reluctance at BOWA to engage in direct representation of or inquiry into the daily realities of slavery as experienced at the Burroughs plantation.

Dr. Baber's findings draw on recent scholarship about plantation systems, and on an alternate reading of both the Burroughs property and Washington's words. When the existence of the 1847 deed is taken into consideration, it appears very likely that the Burroughs family occupied a larger house on the 7-acre tract of land bordering Hales Ford Road. If this was the case, then there was much more physical distance--reflecting a much greater social distance--between the Burroughs family in their "big house" and the slaves in their cabins. This social arrangement was more typical of plantation properties in regions like the Piedmont.

Dr. Baber traces the roots of the present interpretation to an understandable reluctance among many people (Sidney J. Phillips, NPS personnel in the 1950s, Booker T. Washington himself) to confront the racism of American society directly or publicly. However, he argues that it is necessary to reconsider known ethnographic and historical resources at the park and to search out new ones in an attempt to understand the historical context and realities of the plantation system more fully. In Dr. Baber's view, the current

interpretation "flirts dangerously with the idea that slavery 'wasn't so bad after all,' (and with the idea of absolution of social responsibility)" (Baber 75). Identifying the location of the "big house" is of primary importance in gaining a clearer picture of life on the Burroughs farm, but other research also needs to be done to put Booker T. Washington's early life in its proper context.

Specific suggestions for future research can be found in the final section of this summary, pp. 12-16.

Primary Ethnographic Resources

This section lists the principal resources examined by Dr. Baber during this study. Sources are annotated here to indicate how Dr. Baber's use of them may differ from how they have been used in previous assessments of BOWA.

- **County records, including deeds and tax records associated with the Burroughs property from 1826 to 1953.**
 - Dr. Baber created a timeline including all deeds known to Barry Mackintosh and Edwin Bearss (previous researchers who assessed BOWA's resources), and found that new patterns and possibilities emerged, particularly regarding the 1847 deed. The following chronology, while not complete, lists the transactions and events central to an understanding of the original scope of the Burroughs plantation.
 - 1847
Thomas Burroughs purchased an 8-acre piece of land from Aquila Divers, with a northern boundary along Hales Ford Road.
 - 1850
James Burroughs purchased 177 acres from his brother Thomas, presumably including the now-7-acre parcel. James paid \$400 more than the tax valuation of the 177 acres, suggesting that a house had been built on the property between 1847 and 1850.
 - 1856
James Burroughs added another 30 acres to his property, bringing the total to 207 acres.
 - 1868-1894
The Burroughs land was unattended.

- 1870 census

Elizabeth Burroughs (James's widow) was recorded as living with her daughter Anne and Anne's husband, John Ferguson, who may have controlled the property and resources of the Burroughs women.

- by 1884

John Ferguson had bought his own father's 404-acre property bordering the Burroughs land to the east. Baber hypothesizes that in surveying this land in 1873, Ferguson may have annexed the 7-acre tract and house to his own property illegally or extra-legally (see Figure 4, Baber report). This seems more plausible than a clerical error in recording the deed.

- 1894

John D. Robertson purchased 200 acres of land from Elizabeth Burroughs. There is no known mention of a 7-acre or 207-acre tract until 1917.

- 1917

John D. Robertson bought 7 acres from a man named Cook, giving Robertson access to Hales Ford Road. This is the first mention since 1894 of a possible 7-acre tract north of the Burroughs property.

- 1953

The deed transferring the site of BOWA to the NPS, in the Sidney J. Phillips papers at Tuskegee University Archives, contains a note from the law office that prepared the deed, expressing the opinion that the acreage should have been 207 acres, not 214 as Phillips had purchased in 1945.

- **Washington, Booker T. *Up From Slavery*. New York: Airmont, 1967 [1901].**
- **18 boxes of Booker T. Washington's personal papers at Tuskegee University Archives, focusing on the years surrounding Washington's 1908 visit to Hales Ford.**

Washington's autobiography and other sources of information about his early life have traditionally been read as an illustration of the close bonds that existed between many slaves and slaveowners. He states, for example, that there was little bitter feeling among blacks during the Civil War over white involvement in a struggle that would uphold slavery (1967: 21), and speaks of whites and blacks laboring together under more or less equal conditions.

Dr. Baber's training as an anthropologist leads him to read Washington's words differently, in the context of contemporary knowledge about slaveholding systems and race relations in the United States. He questions whether Washington's

description of close master/slave relationships can be accepted at face value. He suggests that Washington's picture of race relations may have originated in:

- Washington's own early experiences within a system designed to maintain very clear superordinate and subordinate roles (in other words, Booker T. Washington learned in his childhood to be deferential rather than demanding)
- Washington's choice to compromise and to minimize racial tension in order to claim the moral high ground and negotiate for the greatest possible educational benefits for African-Americans within the charged racial climate of the post-Civil War era

Dr. Baber also suggests that Washington's words may be read literally to give a picture of greater social distance between slaves and owners than is seen in the current arrangement of buildings at BOWA. His references imply a "big house" of greater stature and at a greater distance from the slave quarters.

- **Booker T. Washington's 1908 visit to his birthplace.**

Standing approximately where Washington stood in 1908, Dr. Baber imagined alternate readings of the landscape that would resolve the inconsistencies he had noted in Washington's own words, and in other historical resources available to the park (especially the 1847 deed).

The idea of a "big house" standing on the knoll just above the Burroughs cemetery fits more closely with the patterns of watershed, viewshed, and spatial status in plantation systems like that of the Piedmont. The major residence would have been placed on high ground, not low as in the current park layout. It would also have been situated to emphasize important status differences between owners and slaves.

Dr. Baber reads Washington's 1908 words not as literal descriptions, but rather as parables designed to promote a particular strategy for race relations. In Dr. Baber's view, Washington often cloaked the truth in parables, as a measure of protection against enemies and unbelievers, or as a way of reaching compromise in a racially-charged social climate. Read this way, Booker T. Washington's 1908 comments about his birthplace can no longer be accepted as a reliable resource on which to base interpretation. Washington's written and spoken words are, rather, material that is itself subject to interpretation, and cannot be given the same weight as "hard" evidence like the 1847 deed.

- **Griffin, John W. Archeological Investigations, Cabin Site, Booker T. Washington National Monument, 1959.**

Griffin documented the actual location of a cabin at BOWA, but concluded that the "replica cabin" on that site was not the birth cabin of Booker T. Washington.

Dr. Baber found that the locations of the cabins and "big house" had not been mapped completely by Griffin, and that a subsequent site map by Barry Mackintosh was not drawn to scale. Dr. Baber employed two students to make the first complete scale map of all known buildings at the cabin site (see Figure 1, p. 27, Baber 1998).

This drawing revealed important information about the spatial relationships among the structures, and helped lead Dr. Baber to his conclusion that another "big house" must have existed elsewhere on the Burroughs property.

- **Robertson, Grover and Peter. Interviews with Historian Albert J. Benjamin, 1964.**

The current interpretation of BOWA rests largely on these interviews with sons of the man who purchased the Burroughs plantation in 1894. Unfortunately, Historian Benjamin never directly asked the brothers whether they were aware that the Burroughs family had lived in the supposed "big house." However, there are indirect indications to support Dr. Baber's hypothesis about an alternate location for the "big house."

- Peter Robertson stated that the building now identified as the "big house" had originally been a log house that was considerably renovated by his father. This suggests that it would not, in its original form, have been an adequate dwelling for the 14 members of the Burroughs family who are known to have lived in the "big house" at one time.
- **Bearss, Edwin C. *The Burroughs Plantation as a Living Historical Farm*. National Park Service, 1969.**

This report provided the historical background currently used to interpret the plantation system at BOWA. Like Barry Mackintosh's Administrative History, Bearss's report was part of a shift that took place away from the "birthplace" interpretation of the monument and toward a "living farm" approach.

Bearss's work contains the earliest published record found so far of the 1847 deed. However, both Bearss and Mackintosh started from the assumption that the Burroughs property included only the 200 acre tract, so Bearss did not examine the 1847 deed closely.

Neither the "birthplace" nor the "living farm" concepts led anyone to think that determining the exact boundaries of the Burroughs farm might be crucial to understanding the site.

- **Mackintosh, Barry. *Booker T. Washington National Monument: An Administrative History*. National Park Service, BOWA, 1969.**

-- *The Burroughs Family: Owners of Booker T. Washington*. National Park Service, BOWA, 1969.

Mackintosh's work contains documentation of the first historic site survey of the Burroughs plantation (1953), which concluded that there was no known structure on the property that could be associated with Booker T. Washington.

The Burroughs Family also contains James Burroughs's property inventory in 1861. The amount of material listed in this inventory seems to require much more living space than can be accounted for under the existing interpretation of the Burroughs farm site. The three existing structures (or outlines of structures) would have been insufficient for the number of people living at the farm from 1850 through 1865.

Mackintosh supported the "birthplace" emphasis for the park, and reiterated material in 1954 and 1956 reports that concluded there was no evidence of additional structures, like a larger Burroughs house, on BOWA property.

- **Harlan, Louis R. *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader 1856-1901*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.**

Harlan's 1972 biography has greatly influenced many people's views of Booker T. Washington. His largely critical assessment of Washington's accommodation with racism has led many to overlook the reasons and sources of Washington's strategies for compromise.

Too, his tendency to associate the Piedmont region with the mountain region to the west rather than the plantation region to the south may have contributed to the perception of the Burroughs family as "dirt farmers" rather than fuller participants in the slaveholding culture of the South. Dr. Baber's own sources indicate that the Piedmont was a transitional region in that culture, but that patterns of owner/slave relationships were by no means equalized as a result of the region's distance from larger plantations to the south.

- **Scholarly sources of information about plantation systems.**

Dr. Baber draws on the work of E. Franklin Frazier, Charles Wagley, Sidney W. Mintz, and many others in reconstructing the social, economic, and geographical factors that would have influenced Booker T. Washington's life as a slave. This work places knowledge about the Burroughs family within larger patterns of history to reach the following conclusions:

- Studies of slavery in the Caribbean offer fruitful opportunity for controlled comparison with the American plantation system, in that similar patterns of growth and expansion can be found in Caribbean and American slavery.
- The inner dynamics of the plantation system tended to produce more, not less, demand for slaves. Frontier and "upcountry" areas like Virginia's Piedmont were on the periphery of this system, but still heavily involved in it, and populated by many farmers who were hoping to profit from the system's potential for growth.
- The Piedmont region was an area of diversified farming that supported a fairly prosperous middle-class majority. Based on what is known about the Burroughs family's property and social status, they seem to have belonged to this middle class. This class has been understudied, perhaps because scholars have tended to focus on the richest or poorest of slaveowners.
- Plantation systems expressed their hierarchical nature in sociocultural and spatial organization. Slave quarters were not close to owners' quarters except in the poorest of farms, and the Burroughs farm was not among the poorest in the region.

The Phillips Era at BOWA

A final source used by Dr. Baber is information about the Sidney J. Phillips era at BOWA. Information about Phillips was found in Barry Mackintosh's Administrative History; in files and papers at BOWA and at Tuskegee University Archives; in records of the Congressional Hearing to establish BOWA; and in the text of *Mission 66* produced by the NPS in 1956.

Dr. Baber treats this information as secondary, because he wishes to build his interpretation on verifiable historical fact rather than on questions of motivation. He has attempted to view the evidence about the park unclouded by Phillips's racial politics and the federal government's response to them. However, since those factors have influenced interpretive strategies at the park, Dr. Baber does consider them briefly, and reaches the following conclusions:

- For quite different reasons, Sidney Phillips and the NPS promoted similar interpretations of BOWA at the time of its founding. Both favored the "birthplace" concept, and both avoided any direct approach to the questions of race, racism, and slavery contained in the story of Booker T. Washington. This avoidance has inevitably resulted in problems of interpretation, since race cannot realistically be separated from the site. These issues remained in the background until the interpretive shift begun by Superintendent Bill Gwaltney in the 1990s.
- It seems possible that the interpretive error about the "big house" may be linked to the uneasiness about race that has been a feature of BOWA strategies since the time of Sidney Phillips. Had Phillips or the NPS been more willing to examine issues of race, pertinent material culture (for example, the 1847 deed) would less likely have been overlooked.
- However, it is important to understand Phillips's behavior, like Washington's, as a strategy for working within a climate of racist belief and practice. Phillips's political maneuvering was a reflection of the shifting race relations of the 1950s. Phillips modeled himself after Booker T. Washington, and tried to obtain resources for African-Americans by accommodating racial segregation or exploiting white fears that the truth about racism in America was a useful propaganda tool for communists.

Methodology

Dr. Baber's consideration of the ethnographic and historical resources of BOWA makes use of a "crosswalk" or "multi-matrix" system. In this system, specific findings in each piece of documentary evidence are compared with findings in all other available documentary evidence. This method is useful in identifying potential gaps in knowledge and resources. For example, it became clear from this study that much more work needs to be done to understand specific social patterns of the plantation system in the Piedmont region during the era when Booker T. Washington was a slave. Only then can the park be interpreted in the context of its former use as a plantation.

The second component of this study involved the identification of possible community partners at BOWA. Much of this work was undertaken by Dr. Anna Lawson, in cooperation with Dr. Baber.

Two primary strategies were employed to explore potential partnerships. Dr. Lawson examined partnership models at other national parks, and studied BOWA's current mailing lists, newsletters, and programs to identify current and potential partners. She then met and interviewed more than 20 people, representing 17 institutions, organizations, or agencies in the general vicinity of BOWA. In selecting these groups, she looked for a close "fit" with the mission of BOWA. These interviews provided

information about regional museums, chambers of commerce or economic development offices, parks, colleges and universities, a senior citizens' group, NAACP, a historical society, and a land trust.

Dr. Baber undertook a related aspect of this survey, focusing on public schools and area churches. His central data was obtained after a visit to the True Vine Baptist Church in Franklin County, VA, in March 1998. He distributed questionnaires to the congregation; the 24 responses received by September 1998 were collated to provide the data contained in the "Recommendations" section, below.

Recommendations and Directions for Future Research, Interpretation, and Partnerships

1. Interpretation of slavery and race relations has always posed problems for BOWA. Superintendent Bill Gwaltney began the shift toward a closer consideration of the realities of slavery at the park. Superintendent Rebecca Harriet and her staff are to be commended for continuing this interpretive shift, and for opening up the park resources to contemporary analysis by recently trained experts in cultural anthropology and archaeology.

2. BOWA cannot be understood without reference to slavery, race relations, and racism. This fact makes the park a potentially valuable resource, both locally and nationally, in understanding the history of these complex subjects. Unless and until conclusive new evidence is found, interpretive plans for BOWA should include the following three areas:

- a) focus on the birthplace cabin
- b) the historical farm concept
- c) focus on race, racism, and slavery, drawing on current knowledge of plantation systems and American race relations.

The Official Map and Guide should be modified to represent all three interpretive shifts spatially. Visitors should experience the site from the perspective of those who lived in the slave quarters, and also from the perspective of a hypothetical "big house" on the knoll north of the cemetery.

3. Archaeological work should be done to verify the likely existence of a "big house" on the 7-acre tract bordering Hales Ford Road. Dr. Amber Moncure, archaeologist working at BOWA, is already beginning to look for physical remains of this house. Two possible foundation stones have been identified as perhaps the only material evidence of a structure on this property.

4. History has been interpreted at BOWA without an adequate understanding of the changing social circumstances of slaveholders in the Piedmont area in the mid-19th

century. The results of this kind of gap in knowledge can be seen in the "big house" question, where inconsistencies in interpretation were overlooked because they were not being placed in the context of a broader understanding of the plantation system of the region.

Historical and ethnographic research should be an ongoing part of interpretation at BOWA. It is important to work to reconcile all known details, no matter how small, with one another. Wherever possible, material culture (including legal documents such as deeds and wills) should be emphasized over sources that are subject to interpretation. New research should investigate:

- regional permutations of the slavery/plantation system in the Piedmont area
- the social circumstances of middle-class slaveowners like James Burroughs
- the Hales Ford community
- the history of Franklin and Bedford Counties
- Booker T. Washington's letters (for information about his childhood)
- local court records of transactions linked to slavery and systems of social control
- local wills, marriage certificates, and county tax records (for information about social class in Hales Ford in the 19th century)
- the influence of Booker T. Washington's early childhood and slave status on his social philosophy

5. The interpretation of slavery at BOWA should be enhanced by attention to:

- a) an understanding of specific patterns in slaveholding systems, especially in this region of Virginia
- b) a comparison with other similar systems (eg. indentured servitude, Caribbean slavery)
- c) the range of reasons for many slaves' apparent docility, and other patterns of behavior associated with slavery

6. The interpretation of Booker T. Washington at BOWA should be enhanced by:

- a) presenting his actions, ideas, and choices within the context of a wider arena of American race relations, to promote a better understanding of both his achievements and his apparent failures
- b) addressing the complex question of how we can reconcile Washington's popularity during his own time with his political and social compromises
- c) emphasizing Booker T. Washington's own character as an illustration of what slavery meant to those who were enslaved (for example, interpreting Washington's "engaging duplicity" as a result of master-slave dynamics)
- d) reinterpreting his statements in light of Dr. Baber's insights about Washington's use of parables

e) reinterpreting Washington in light of what was felt about him before Harlan's 1972 biography, perhaps using information from his descendants and Washington's early papers in the Library of Congress

7. The three zones of BOWA need to be redefined.
 - the development zone conflicts with an appropriate viewshed
 - the historic zone extends to Highway 122, and south beyond Gills Creek (to include Holley's Mill)
 - the Special Use Zone remains the same
8. Sidney J. Phillips and Portia Washington Pittman should be represented in the visitors center by portraits and a statement about their role in the establishment of the park.
9. Brochures, maps and guides, and interpretive plans should be shared between BOWA and Tuskegee Institute Historical Site.
10. Examine initial NPS discussions of the park in greater detail to determine what was said about the building remains on the property in the Phillips era of the 1950s. This research would move past a reconstruction based only on the focus on Washington's actual birthplace, and toward a broader view of the Burroughs plantation.
11. The Heritage Trail at the park could be developed into an additional interpretive theme to illustrate additional aspects of slave life on the Burroughs plantation.
12. All original deeds of the Burroughs property constitute original artifacts and material culture of the period. They should be carefully preserved at BOWA.
13. The African-American population in the area represents a community with close ties to BOWA. Based on surveys received from the True Vine Baptist Church congregation, the majority of African-Americans in Franklin County have visited BOWA and intend to do so in the future. Those surveyed showed a great deal of pride in Booker T. Washington and his achievements.
14. Based on Dr. Anna Lawson's investigation of partnership prospects for BOWA:
 - in general, there was a great deal of enthusiasm for BOWA partnerships among those interviewed by Dr. Lawson
 - there is a concern about NPS restrictions on non-park advertising at park sites, and the resulting lack of reciprocity in publicizing partners' sites and programs
 - there was also concern about BOWA's remote location, which may be addressed through the development of a county Heritage Trail

15. Three specific projects highlighted by Dr. Lawson may offer ways to build new partnerships:

- ideas for souvenir items, particularly a children's book and coloring book
- the concept of a Southwest Virginia Black Heritage driving tour
- the use of Washington Park in Roanoke as a BOWA satellite site, and for a summer day camp at the monument for area children and teenagers